Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 has been notified for operation with effect from 31st December, 2007. The responsibility for implementing the Act lies with the State/UT Governments. Soon after the operationalisation of the Act, this Ministry had addressed the State/UT Governments on 11.1.2008 for constituting various Committees under the Act and for initiating necessary action for recognition and vesting of the forest rights in the forest dwelling Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers. The State/UT Governments are still in the process of implementing the provisions of the Act and information of progress has started pouring in. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs has not received any information from the States so far regarding the claim applications filed for vesting of forest rights and distribution of pattas to the elgible forest dwelling scheduled tribes and other traditional forest dwellers.

ST status to some communities in Assam

4135. SHRI KUMAR DEEPAK DAS: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Assam Legislative Assembly has passed a unanimous decision to grant ST status to six communities, including Koch Rajbongshi, Ahom, Tea Tribe, etc. in Assam and the same resolution was handed over to the Ministry;

(b) whether Government is considering the said proposal in consultation with the appropriate authority, for reconsideration of issuing ST status to such communities; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (DR. RAMESHWAR ORAON): (a) This Ministry had received proposals from the State Government of Assam alongwith Resolution passed unanimously by the Assam Legislative Assembly in its sitting held on 5.8.2004 for inclusion of 6 (Six)communities of Assam namely Koch Rajbongshi, Tai-Ahom, Chutia, Moran, Motak and communities belonging to Tea and Ex-Tea Garden Tribes in the list of Scheduled Tribes of the State of Assam.

(b) and (c) These proposals have been processed as per modalities approved by the Government of India on 15/06/1999 for determining the claims for inclusion in, exclusion from and other modifications in Orders specifying Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes' lists in consultation with the appropriate authority namely the Concerned State Government, Registrar General of India and the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes as mentioned in the approved modalities. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs has sought additional justification from State Government of Assam on their proposal for inclusion of six communities in the ST list of Assam.

Implementation of Schemes for Tribals

4136. SHRI KANJIBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any agency for coordination between this Ministry and the Ministry of Rural Development, for proper implementation of various schemes of that Ministry in tribal and scheduled areas and particularly for implementation of NREGP;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, whether Government finds it proper to do so?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (DR.RAMESHWAR ORAON): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The "Central Employment Guarantee Council" has been consituted in the Ministry of Rural Development, under the provisions of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 to discharge the functions, and perform the duties, assigned to it under the Act. A representative of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs is also nominated in the Council. This facilitates coordination with the Ministry of Rural Development on issues relating to tribals on NREGA.

Abuse of children trafficked from West Bengal

4137. SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that children from seven districts of West Bengal are being trafficked to different parts of the country and are being subjected to many forms of abuses like unsafe working conditions, lack of food, beatings, etc.;

(b) if so, what Government has done to identify these children and return them to their homes;

(c) whether Government is also aware that during the last three months, about 6000 children have been trafficked;

(d) if so, whether Government has reports of missing children, country-wide; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) As per information given by National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB) specific information on child trafficking is not maintained district-wise. However, the figure for missing children (0-18 years) in West Bengal was 5688 in the year 2005.

(b) The Ministry of Women and Child Development is implementing the Scheme of Ujjawala wherein inputs of rehabilitation and reintegration of victims of trafficking including children is provided.

(c) to (e) The Ministry of Women and Child Development has no information on 6000 children being trafficked in the past three months. As per information given by the NCRB, a State-wise data on missing children (0-18 years) for the year 2004-07 is given in the Statement.